

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THE FAIRNALS OF TIPTON. By VIRGINIA W. JOHNSON. 12 mo, pp. 482. Charles Scribner's Sons.

This story bears about the same relation to the orthodox novel which a certain class of extravagant and lawless play, very popular at some of our city theatres, bears to legitimate comedy. It aims at nothing higher than a gratification of the general desire to be mildly puzzled and lazily entertained, and its method is very much like that of the so-called dramatist of contemporary life and manners, who amuses us by exhibiting a life which has no existence outside the theatre and manners which would hardly be tolerated even there. Our curiosity is stimulated by a little mystery, our anticipations are held in suspense by a missing box of papers, two pairs of lovers playing at cross purposes appeal to the universal craving for sentiment, and two families of eccentrics, always thwarting one another, supply the allowance of farcical activity which is necessary to give the piece "go". The book has movement and excitement enough to fulfill its purpose, and the scheme of bringing the two sets of mutually antagonistic and strongly contrasted Fairnals together under the same roof, and on the same enterprise was certainly comical. In the management of the mystery of the old farmhouse, however, Miss Johnson is not entirely successful; and the piece comes to an end not because the plot has been artistically worked out, but because after the dramatic persons have chattered and babbled through the standard number of acts, it is time to dismiss the audience before the entertainment begins to pall. In short, "The Fairnals of Tipton" is of little note as a literary performance, but in its way it is successful.

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